10:Albert E-5 (1956-1957)1963
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quently, in domestic battles, the husband can vanquish the wife. He must, nevertheless, be on his guard if she becomes very angry. For, even though men (as superiors) are able to control their anger, women (as inferiors) are likely to lose their heads. She can take a knife and kill her husband, says the Hutu; she will poison her husband, says the Tutsi. Furthermore, women are regarded as less courageous than men in the presence of enemies; they are more easily discouraged when there is misfortune; they cry more easily; and they do not conceal their emotions. No attention whatever is paid to any evidence which might contradict the stereotype.

A man who is jealous of his wife's lovers is considered an imbecile. Particularly among the rich, a wife can show her fidelity to her husband's interests by going to bed with his superiors, if by this means she can calm the superior or obtain valuable information from him. Out of delicacy, the husband visits his neighbours when his superior comes to call. On the other hand, most family troubles are explained by the presumably unlimited capacity of women for jealousy. At marriage, a Rundikazi is supposed to be a virgin. Once she is married, it is said, she has great and constant need for sexual satisfaction. A man is privileged, if not obliged, to sleep with all his wives, the wives of his brothers and of his parallel cousins, his female cross-cousins, the wives of his male cross-cousins, the sisters and female cross- and parallel-cousins of his wife, and various other ladies. The kinship system is obviously a highly classificatory one. Nevertheless, men must discharge their sexual obligations in secret. If a husband finds his wife in bed with another man, he is morally obligated to beat his wife and to quarrel a little with the man. Far more serious, if a woman sees her husband entering the house of his sister-in-law, there will be no more peace for him at home. A woman, it was explained, is jealous of those with whom her husband sleeps, because the others will perhaps get presents out of him that she wants for herself, or perhaps one of the other women will speak against her to persuade her husband to divorce her. If there appear to be contradictions here, it is probably due to the lack of a truly Rundi perspective.

It is not for nothing, say the Rundi, that the wives of a polygamist are called *abakeba*, rivals.[11] Each woman watches every other wife—the presents she has received from her husband, the size of the property she has been given to cultivate and as an inheritance for her sons, the cows given for her household, the number of children she has, the number of nights the husband spends with her. To calumniate one's *abakeba*, to poison them, to quarrel with them, to give the husband *inzaratsi*—the potion that

462 Among the Bahutu the man assumes the heavy work, construction of the rugo, and clearing of the land; the wife, helped by her husband and those children who are old enough, cultivates the fields. Domestic work is also shared: carrying water and wood, milking the cows, and making the beer are the husband's jobs, while the wife cooks, makes the butter, and keeps the rugo and kraal clean.

593 842 In a way marriage emancipates the munyarwanda woman, but only motherhood gives her the rights which make her a privileged person as compared to her sisters of Black Africa. The more children a woman has, the greater the esteem in which she is held (3).

[163] 3. Families with six, seven, eight, and even ten children are numerous in Ruanda; this prolificacy accounts for the fact that the country's population doubles in about twenty-five years.

593 562 The Mututsi wife is truly the nyirarugo (mistress of the house), the nyirabuja (boss). Her husband consults her [28] in matters of interest, asks her advice on the subject of the children's marriages, etc. In addition, among the Batutsi, she directs the servants, supervises the work of the hill people who come to do the customary labor and also the work of the abagaragu. She cannot, however, dismiss a client or make any important decision without the consent of her husband. If she did so and the husband did not interfere, he would be the laughingstock of the neighborhood and he would be called inganzwa (man without character who is dominated by his wife).

The Banyarwanda have an expression to describe a good wife. They say that she "builds for her husband" (kubakira umugabo).

A Muhutu never fails to make use, on the slightest pretext, of his right of marital castigation. A Mututsi, on the contrary, cannot strike his wife without falling from esteem except for a very serious reason.

● 837 The duty of fidelity exists for both husband and wife. But custom is very tolerant of infractions of conjugal fidelity committed by the man, at least if he belongs to the same social class as the deceived husband.

837 586 The husband's adultery obviously displeases the wife but she nearly always will accept it. However, she sometimes leaves her

837 husband and returns to her parents. The latter will attempt to persuade
586 her to return to her husband, for if she refused they would be obliged to refund the dowry.

The husband who finds out that his wife has committed adultery (gusambana, lit., to take another man) enjoins her not to do it again. The second time he strikes her. If she continues, he repudiates (gusendwa) her publicly. A repudiated wife is brought into disrepute and finds it difficult to marry again. Sometimes the adulterous wife is sent away at night, out of consideration for the family, so that her offense is not known by everybody. [29]

837 Formerly, if the husband surprised his wife in the act, he
586 would have the man arrested and beaten. Then before witnesses he
684 would repudiate his wife. If the accomplice was a nobleman like
563 himself, he was allowed to leave with the woman. But, usually, if he was married, he would return to his wife who would merely make a jealous scene. When the lover was a Mututsi umugaragu he was deprived of his property and exiled far away. If he was a Muhutu, the husband could demand from the Mwami permission to impale him like a cattle thief, or else he would thrash him soundly and have him driven away from the hill. An accomplice of the Mwami's adulterous wife was always killed. In none of these cases was the woman seriously ill-treated.

684 Our occupation has put a stop to cruel punishments, and at the
586 present time the wife's accomplice is not punished at all. Adultery
177 leads only to pecuniary reparation (itshyiru) by the lover. On the other hand, divorce is pronounced to the husband's benefit and the dowry is refunded to him, at least if there are no children by the marriage.

848 If the adulterous woman is pregnant, she will always claim that
586 the child she is expecting is her husband's. Being in doubt, the hus-
837 band takes the child (umusambanano) (1) as soon as it is weaned. He

1. General term designating an illegitimate child, including that born of adultery or incest.

also provides for his wife's needs but does not consent to take up again their life in common.

If the husband is sure that the child is the fruit of adultery, he has nothing more to do with his wife, and her parents adopt the child.

837 It may also happen that the accomplice marries the mother of his child. A complaisant husband, or one who, knowing that his wife is unfaithful, keeps her in spite of all, [30] is the object of ridicule by his neighbors and friends, who do not hesitate to call him inganzwa.

837 586 Among the Bahutu, the adulterous wife is beaten by her husband and sent back to her family. If there are no children from the marriage the husband will claim the dowry paid to the wife's parents.

837 Among the Batwa, adultery is hardly important. If a wife is unfaithful her husband forgives her, and if she is pregnant he considers the child his own.

8. Extramarital Relations

836 684 Sexual relations have always been strictly forbidden to young Batutsi and Bahutu girls. Violation of this interdiction would bring great misfortune to the families, says the voice of the people. In the past, pregnant girls (ikinyandaro) (1) were often even killed with their

1. According to the beliefs of the Banyarwanda, a girl taken by force does not become pregnant.

children, or else they were led beyond the froniters of Ruanda to a desert island in Lake Kivu where they died of hunger, unless the Banyabungo came to their rescue. Sometimes they were led to Urundi where they had to remain until they gave birth. The child was killed or abandoned to the Barundi.

Today these cruel sanctions no longer exist, but a girl-mother is always considered a disgrace (inshyano) to her parents. The latter, however, usually take in the child.

Nevertheless, the young nobles do not deprive themselves of having sexual relations with the abagaragu girls placed with their fathers as servants. On the other hand, the Mututsi young man caught with a girl of his own caste was punished in the past in the same way as the accomplice of a married woman. [31]

837 [574] The great chiefs who possess concubines (insholeke) put them at the disposal of their visiting friends and relatives.

Blood brothers or friends sometimes exchange their wives for a night (guhan'ingo, lit., to exchange the ingo).

837 606 607 Up until recent times, the father-in-law and even the brothers-in-law had the right to spend one or several nights with the wife of his son or brother. The father-in-law had the right to claim this right without discussion, while the brothers-in-law had to have the brother's permission. The wife who refused to share her bed with her father-in-law or one of her brothers-in-law could be driven away. The husband even had the right to compel his wife to give her favors to one of his friends.

CHAPTER III. DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE

1. Death

765 Two days after a death, the whole clan arrives to assist the widow and/or [illegible]ans in their mourning. The mother and her children shave off their hair, take off their bracelets, and abstain from washing their clothes (kwirabura, lit., to become black). One of the brothers of the deceased lights a fire that burns in the rugo without cease for two days (igitshaniro). When it has gone out, the children and their uncle take the ashes and go in secret to throw them in a marsh.

[834] Mourning lasts for two months during which time the married sons may not have intercourse with their wives.

On the first day of the third month the members of the family return. In the evening they all assemble, swallow [32] great quantities of beer, and sing happily (kwera, lit., to become white). The brother of the deceased who took charge of the igitshaniro, or in his absence, another brother, must share the bed of the widow (kweza). The married sons, in the order of their birth, simulate the sexual act with their wives.

The following day, the widow and the wives of the married sons put milk in the churns and make butter (1). Then all the members of

1. During the mourning they could not touch the churns. A stranger to the family of the deceased came and made the butter.

the family rub themselves with chalk, put on white garments, and go

585 As soon as they have been delivered, the bride follows the matchmaker to the newly-built hut of the bridegroom. There the wedding is duly celebrated; the family members give presents to each other, eat and drink, and dance. Through her marriage the wife becomes part of the husband's family (patriarchate). On her wedding day the bride is expected to feign great sorrow; she covers her head with a veil, and the bridegroom must try to assuage her grief by giving her presents. For seven days the young couple remain unseen in their hut, but even on the following days the wife covers her head with a veil whenever she goes out of the house (No. 4, p. 222; No. 19, p. 359).

Great value is placed on the bride's virginity. If the sleeping mat of the young wife shows traces of blood after the wedding night, the young husband gratefully sends this proof to his wife's parents and adds a hoe as a present.

There are quite a number of obstacles to marriage.
582 Above all lineal and collateral blood relatives, members of the same clan or of the same totem group, are not allowed to marry each other; exogamy is the supreme rule (see p. 160).

582 Even among the Batwa of Urundi marriage between close
563 relatives is not permitted. Marriage between a Muhutu and a Mutussi woman is not permitted, or it is possible only by royal permission in exceptional cases. The racial pride of the Batussi repudiate such a union. Even where toleration is the
836 rule, sexual intercourse between unmarried members of the same race is probably rare since Barundi mothers keep a watchful eye on their adolescent daughters. It may safely be said that the Barundi do not permit pre-marital freedom on principle.

The husband expects marital fidelity, unless he purposely
837 surrenders his wife to a clan member. In contrast, the husband
684 is not so strict about his own fidelity. It is true that adultery committed in secret is not punished by law as a case of theft, although in fact it is regarded as such by the Barundi. However, the deceived husband is entitled to kill the guilty parties in flagrante delicto (No. 19, p. 14). In most cases he contents

684 himself with driving the adulteress from the house. In Urundi
837 one generally does not find the laxity of marital customs which exists in several other Bahima states, for example, in Ankole and among the Massai, where the husband customarily lends his wife to any member of his kin group who happens to visit him. Even in Urundi, however, married Batussi women take much greater liberties with other Batussi men, particularly with members of the kin group, than do unmarried women. However, this does not apply to Bantu men (see p. 101).

586 For this and many other reasons, divorce and dissolution of marriage (uwuhakanji) are frequent occurrences. It is not unusual to find persons who have been married five or six times. Since on the average the purchase price of a bride is quite low and can also be paid back without much difficulty, men and women often use the slightest provocation to separate from each other. If a husband mistreats his wife, she leaves him and returns to her parents or to her relatives who then do not have to refund the purchase price to the guilty husband. [108] If, however, the husband drives his wife away because she is lazy, malicious, or even committed adultery, the parents of the wife have to refund the purchase price of the bride to the husband.
[587] Persons who were divorced may remarry whenever they desire. In case of divorce, small children are left with the mother; of the older children the boys follow the father, and the girls go with the mother (No. 19, p. 174).

587 After the husband's death his widow (umufakasi) becomes the property of the brother or of the closest relative of the deceased (see p. 92), for when she married she was admitted into her husband's family.

587 In East Africa this so-called levirate is also customary
171 among the Sulu, the Wagogo, Massai, Turkana, Kamasia, Galla, Baganda, Banjankole, Banjaruanda, and others (No. 30, Vol. II, pp. 384, 403, 412, 419, 428, 538, 541).

768 If the deceased has neither brothers nor other close rela-
736 tives, the widow returns to her own family and takes her minor

595 afford it lives in polygamy in order to have workers to manage his property and to maintain his social position, in order to be able to associate with one wife when the other one is unapproachable during confinement, and for other reasons which are mainly of a practical and economic [109] nature rather than erotic. Thus, many Batussi have two wives, the bigger chiefs three or more, and the king has an entire harem. The Batwa, however, are almost all monogamous because of their poverty (No. 19, p. 447).

There is a widespread custom among the Bahima of Ankole and Kisiba whereby several brothers who are too poor to afford a wife individually pool their resources and buy one wife between them; the children belong to the oldest brother (No. 27, p. 105). This custom of polyandry is apparently very rare in Urundi.
[837] However, brothers of a family are often excessively intimate with their brothers' wives.

In Urundi each wife has her hut and her household in a separate kraal. Among prosperous Batussi two wives seldom live within the confines of one enclosure. Usually their houses are a long way from each other, whenever possible on different mountains. The husband is alternately the guest of one or the other. In polygamous families the wife by the first marriage is
[428] the head wife, and in matters of inheritance her children take precedence over other wives' children. In addition to regular marriages, concubinage with women of a lower social class exists.
[429] The concubine (umukeba, umugensi), although recognized socially, may be dismissed at any time and she and her children
[563] have no right of inheritance. Since Bahima wives are not very
[842] fecund, many Batussi men take Bahutu women, who are much more fecund, as concubines in order to increase the number of children in the household. This often happens in other Bahima states, and the consequence is that many Bantu in this area have a strong admixture of Bahima blood (No. 17, p. 631). Marriage
[583] on a temporary or trial basis is unknown among the Barundi;
548 marriages are, after all, contracted and dissolved so easily that such provisional unions are unnecessary.

4: Maquet E-5 (1950-1951) 1954 FO42 Rundi FO42

qualification for the happy one is not to live a blameless life on earth, but to undergo initiation into the *Ryangombe* cult.'

Thus the ethics of the Banyarwanda are not integrated on a religious basis such as the will of God. What is the principle of integration, or rather, we should first ask, are their ethical conceptions integrated? On the surface they consist, like any moral code, of a multiplicity of prohibitions, orders, and exhortations. Have they achieved a synthesis of these separate elements by reducing the multiplicity to one or a few principles? Or, what amounts to the same thing, could they give a definition of good and evil?

In Ruanda a great number of particular rules are subsumed under general principles such as: do not do what is harmful to people of your group or of your country; do what people related to you would like; submit to your superiors. Principles such as these are already on a higher level of abstraction than the particular rules. When informants are asked to account for a given rule or principle they give as the final justification: 'It has always been done that way in Ruanda.' We may perhaps express the Ruanda definition of good and evil in these terms: That is good (or evil) which tradition has defined as good (or evil).

Tradition is indeed a powerful force in cultures which, as in Ruanda, have been isolated for centuries from world currents. Each generation is more conscious of the importance of what it has received from the preceding one than is possible when much of what constitutes its way of life comes not from its ancestors but from some other social tradition. Moreover, their relations with their neighbours whom they frequently subjugated have persuaded Banyarwanda of the excellence of the ways of life transmitted by their forefathers. In such a situation the traditional character of a rule appears to be sufficient justification. If the ancestors, who were so wise, behaved in that way it would be preposterous to question it.

But it would be misleading to picture the Banyarwanda as following blindly the moral rules framed in a remote past without having any idea of their purpose. Some old men have a clear understanding of the social significance of certain rules. They explained, for example, that the duality of the rules concerning adultery committed by the husband or by the wife was accounted for by the importance of the wife's function in procreation. She has thus a greater responsibility than the husband for maintaining the integrity of the family.

Does this kind of thinking extend so far as independence of tradition? Some informants told us that, apart from the authority of custom, some actions were thought of as dishonourable in themselves. But these informants were Christians and, apparently, very much influenced by their religion. Moreover, they could not quote a clear case of conflict between tradition and ethics.

No moral code can achieve an absolute character in all its precepts. Prohibitions and commands frequently relate only to certain categories of persons and situations. Even the Christian Western ethic, which realizes to

754 11. In order to wreak vengeance on an unfaithful wife who
684 has left the conjugal home, the husband fetches a plant known by the
837 name of uruburamadjo /406/ the etymological meaning of which (kubura kujya) is "to have no place to go," that is to say, to have no place to stay. This indicates the use to which the angered husband puts the plant, and the results he expects from it. He braids it into a sort of pad upon which he must place butter or pour castor oil that belonged to the unfaithful woman. The mystic pad is hidden under a rock. It must be removed a month later and placed under another rock. This method, add the credulous natives, infallibly creates difficulties between the fugitive woman and her temporary husbands. She will be dismissed as many times as her first spouse shifts the magic pad.

783 B. Purifiers or exorcisers of all sorts and exhumers or mutilators
791 of corpses. In order to ward off evil spells and the deadly consequences that might derive from certain events such as the violation of a taboo, the burning of a hut, a murder, the coming across a corpse or a killed animal, or to avert the fury of a spirit on the rampage, the king, his court, and his subjects call upon the services of people called by the name of Abashumburuzi, Abahanyi b'amachumu, Ababuzi, etc. Like their other colleagues in the occult, mysterious, and magical sciences, these practitioners enjoy official and legal recognition.

1. The Abashumburuzi, sorcerers who are resorted to by taboo violators.

Abashumburuzi is the title given by the people of the Lukiga (that is, the mountain people) to a group of purifiers whose function is often the same as that of the mugangahuzi, or "protectors against lightning," with whom they are often wrongly identified.

755 The mushumburuzi, if one holds to the etymological meaning
783 of his trade, is believed to have the power of expelling spirits from the body of a sick person (1). To do this, /407/ he performs veritable exorcisms, makes magic passes over the body of the patient, calls the spirits by name, and begs them to let go of their victim. He holds in the hand a bunch of shrub branches endowed with magic properties and moves them over the body of the sick person.

The spirit that caused the illness takes refuge in the symbolic broom. Then all the magician has to do is to take the spirit-chasing

585 567 848 588 Extramarital Relations. Not all women who share a household with a man are his regular wives (basumba kazi) with whom he has entered into a formal purchase marriage. Concubines and slaves (baja) are also kept in Ruanda. The concubines are [225] usually childless widows and abandoned or fugitive women. They settle wherever they find a relatively good refuge. The baja are sold by their parents when they are children, usually in exchange for food during a famine. They are simply women without ties, but who are otherwise very much like the other women and usually also have their own huts. Their children are likewise said to belong to the father's family, although they are not regarded as equal. Such children of Batutsi men, for example, are said not to be regarded as Batutsi although they have the same family name.

588 567 The chiefs grant baja to their clients, a practice which is even more clearly defined among the Azande and Mangbetu, for example. The baja, along with the cow, are the means whereby the powerful one binds his clients to himself and thus strengthens his power.

567 574 837 Just as a man can grant a cow to a client and also demand it back, so he can likewise put a muja at the temporary disposal of a favorite. Under these circumstances the entertainment of guests with women "who are to warm his bed for him" is quite understandable. The less esteemed guests are given baja; the highly respected guests, on the other hand, are honored by being offered regular wives.

574 837 In general, a man on a journey has at his disposal the wives of his blood brothers. Dr. Kandt (1) says that from certain social

1. Kandt, R., Caput Nili (Berlin, 1904), p. 177.

aspects this arrangement has its positive points: "Alternating connubium, that is, the interchangeable pairing of several male blood relatives with all their wives, as is permitted in Ruanda, prevents the loss of the female element in the preservation of the race, should the male element prove unfit."

574 This custom seems to be widespread particularly among the
837 Batutsi as well as among the Bahima. Father Achte sees in it the reason why polygamy is relatively undeveloped among the Bahima.

548 In spite of polygamy and the fact that it is easy to enter into marriage in Ruanda, there is a sort of prostitute. These are widows or older women, as well as girls who have not found a husband. They give themselves in exchange for presents, thereby earning their living. They are called inzorezi. Young men have sexual intercourse with them before marriage. The word is derived from the verb kuzerera, "to run about."

836 Prostitutes and concubines are distinguished from nyamuraza, roving girls who enter into a sort of trial marriage and have intercourse in this way. They hope [226] by this means to persuade a man who would otherwise not have given them any consideration to make the conventional payment and thus make a proper marriage. This attempt may be repeated several times.

586 Divorce. If a man is not satisfied with his wife he may, without further ado, send her back home. If the woman was at fault, if she was unfaithful or sterile, a demand may be made for the return of the payment given for her.

In Mulera the cow which was paid for the woman, as well as all the animal's young, are returned in this type of divorce if the woman has had no children. If the woman has lived for some time with her husband, the cows may be replaced by calves. While I was in Ruasa the whole countryside was in a state of excitement over an unusual divorce suit. A man named Lwamakuba paid for his wife with a cow which in the course of time gave his father-in-law ten calves. When the wife grew old, her husband sent her back home indicating that she was sterile. He demanded the return of his payment which had meanwhile increased to a whole herd of cattle. After many negotiations the wife returned with an excellent cow which was supposed to make up for her beauty defects. The husband took his wife back, and the matter was settled. After a time, the wife was sent back again. Five times the woman returned, always with another cow. At the time of my visit the woman was being sent back for the sixth time.

572 608 614 178 of the view that blood brotherhood is connected with the Bantu substratum or at least with clan organization: the use of banana beer and hoe-money in the ceremony; and the relationship between blood brotherhood and the system of marriage prohibitions.

572 608 In the cults associated solely with the Batutsi, only millet beer seems to be used. Here we have banana beer mentioned in the curse formula which is undoubtedly very old. It is very strange, however, that milk is also mentioned along with beer. The latter fact warns us to be cautious.

572 608 582 Much more important, on the other hand, is the marriage prohibition which even at the present time is scrupulously observed. The children of blood brothers regard themselves as related. This relationship is called bapfasoni. The statement that the marriage prohibition also applies to other relatives of the father's blood brother was not emphatically denied, but it seems to me most unlikely. I was also unable to find out whether a man may marry women from the clan of his blood brother.

572 608 837 According to several reports, sexual intercourse with the wife of a blood brother is regarded as a great insult, but other reports have it that the women are at the disposal of visiting blood brothers. (1) This point could not be fully cleared up because,

1. Kandt, R., Caput Nili (Berlin, 1904), p. 177.

among the Batutsi, friends are quite commonly in the habit of entertaining one another with their wives.

572 608 563 Batutsi and Bahutu enter into blood brotherhood with one another. Neither of them, however, enters such a pact with the Batwa.

614 621 The Clan Community. The political significance of the clan varies greatly in different parts of Ruanda. The clan is prominent in areas where the Batutsi state has not yet been firmly established, as, for instance, in Bugoye and above all in Mulera. In Nduga, on the other hand, clans have little political significance. This significance is in direct proportion to the degree of concentration of clan members in a territory.

7: Roscoe M-5 (1919-1920) 1924
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be consummated until he had gone. The rest of the bride's party left on the second day, after receiving presents. 585

A son-in-law did not fear his wife's parents, but was regarded and treated by them as a son. [606]

A man might marry as many as five wives, but he brought only one of them to live in his own village; for the others he built houses in their villages and visited them there. If he was wealthy, which was usually the condition of a man who married more than one wife, he gave each of them cows to supply her with milk, a man to herd them, men to dig her field, and also maids to wait upon her and work in her field. 595 [556]

A wife was usually restricted to her husband in sexual intercourse, but when a great friend of the husband paid him a visit he might permit him to live with one of his wives who acted as the visitor's wife for the time. It was, however, more usual for a guest to go to another house with his own wife, or for the host and his wife to sleep on a mat on the floor and leave the bed to the guest and his wife. 837

Illness and Death

When a man fell ill, his wife informed his relatives and a medicine-man was summoned to discover by augury whether magic was being used or whether the illness was the work of some ghost. If magic was found to be the cause of the illness, the name of the person using it had also to be discovered by augury, and he was accused and brought before the king or some chief to be tried. Invariably a man who had been discovered by augury to be guilty was condemned without question; he might appeal to the poison ordeal, but he had very little chance of escape, and was always put to death. If the augury showed the illness to be due to a ghost, a bull was offered to the ghost and it was begged to stop troubling the man. 754 [787] 695 683 [775] [782]

Before a man died he generally named his heir, who was usually one of his sons, though not necessarily so and not always the eldest son. If a man died without having named 428 [763]

8: Hall G-5 (1929-31) 1938 FO42 Rundi FO42

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Impotence.
Loss of reason.
Failure to clothe the wife.
Failure to cultivate.
Failure to provide food.
Wandering habits.
Measuring out food to the wife (instead of giving her free access to the store).
Refusal to eat food.
Accusation of witchcraft.
Continued insult and beating.
Removal of bride-wealth from the relations-in-law.

There are three marital causes where dissolution is threatened, one, because the cow paid in bride-wealth has died, in another because it has gone blind, and in a third because it has borne twin-calves: such a cow is taboo for this purpose, presumably on account of the danger of sympathetic influence on the wife—the advent of twins is not hailed with joy, witness a case where a cow is in issue, the fee of a doctor for removing the curse of twins. [845]

Grounds for divorce of the wife include:

Refusal to work and to cook.
Continued sickness.
Desertion, subdivided into cases where she has gone to her relations, and where she has gone off to another man.

Adultery as such is never cited as a reason for divorce. There is but one case of adultery on record in the Court, the offending man being punished and the woman returned to her husband. [837]

It is but rarely that a woman or her relatives come to Court to sue for a divorce. Normally, if she feels that she has reason for dissatisfaction, she returns to the home of her father or brother, whose duty it is to endeavour to reach an amicable settlement. If this is not done, she remains and abides the issue, or, not infrequently, is married to another man, this precipitating proceedings by the husband. But in a fair number of instances, she goes straight off to another man. [691]

The Court will try to compose matters and to maintain the marriage wherever possible.

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Instances: A runaway wife, sued by her husband, complains that he does not give her clothes and is stingy with food to the extent of measuring

8: Hall G-5 (1929-31) 1938 FO42 Rundi FO42

586 691 587 837

Instances: A man has beaten his wife and driven away her relatives when they came to see him. She leaves him for another man, who is ordered to refund the bride-wealth.

A wife has left her husband and is now pregnant by another man. The husband will be satisfied either with the child or his bride-wealth. The paternity of the second man is established, and bride-wealth is to be paid over.

In several cases a woman's relatives are found to have married her to another man in her husband's absence, or after she has left him and returned home. Here again circumstances determine whether the first or the second union shall be dissolved. In considering these, the voice of the woman is not disregarded, and in one case, after judgement has issued in the original husband's favour, it is amended there and then owing to his wife's refusal to return to him.

586 661 Several marriages are found to be broken up on account of the Chief's seizing cattle paid in bride-wealth.

Instances: A wife goes off to her father's because the Chief has taken the bride-wealth cow.

A man from Urundi pays a cow in bride-wealth, which is seized by the Chief in order to recoup himself after some of his cattle have been stolen by Urundi natives: and the woman's father therefore takes her back.

In a third case, this right or propensity is deliberately made use of by a husband who wishes to shuffle off his wife. He arranges for the Chief to seize the bride-wealth cow with its two calves, and then sends his wife home. But the stratagem fails.

595 578 586 Finally, the existence of polygyny is to be referred to. That it may lead to disharmony in the home appears from two cases, in the former of which the first wife is so aggravated by her husband taking another spouse that she has assaulted him, while in the other a husband is brought to Court for tying up his second wife on suspicion of her having bewitched the first one, with a threat that he would kill her if the first one died. And a third husband finds himself heavily fined for being influenced by the predilections of his first wife. He had paid bride-wealth for a second: the first wife did not approve of the newcomer: her sister coming soon afterwards with a gift of beer, he kept her instead; she had already been promised in marriage, however, and he has to face an indignant betrothed as well as her father, in Court.

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This privileged sexual partnership is not to be understood as an unrestricted freedom irrespective of circumstances. From the point of view of a married woman sex relations with these relatives were privileged in the sense that her husband could not divorce her or dismiss her on these grounds as he could do if the lover was not a relative of that category. For the lover himself, it did not make much difference as the woman was always regarded as being responsible for adultery ('she should have refused'); the husband usually had no claim against him although the lover might have to endure some punishment such as being beaten if caught in the act. We may say, however, that intercourse with a woman relative was privileged for a man in the sense that his wife was supposed not to resent it. In any case these relations were kept secret as far as possible, and it was regarded as seriously lacking in respect to indulge in them when the spouse was not away. When the spouse was absent, travelling for a long time, they were considered normal.

This tolerance concerned only married women. Before marriage girls were supposed to remain virgin. When an unmarried girl became pregnant, she was either killed with the infant or sent away, usually to an island on Lake Kivu where she was left to die, unless rescued and taken by a man of a very much despised tribe, the Shi, living on the western shore of the lake (the present Belgian Congo side). Of course, such a drastic course of action was not always followed, but this was the traditional rule. When the unmarried girl was impregnated by a cousin, these dreadful consequences could be more easily avoided if the parents wanted to exert pressure on the lover to make him marry the girl. But this is the only sense in which it may be said that sexual intercourse for an unmarried girl with a relative was privileged.

On the contrary, maternal parallel cousins of Ego had to be treated with restraint. Although not members of his patrilineage, as were his paternal parallel cousins, his attitude towards them and particularly towards the girls was supposed to be very similar. The incest taboo existed between Ego's descendents and his parallel cousins' descendents until such time as the fact that the two mothers were sisters had been forgotten.

Towards his sororal nieces and nephews, Ego's role was similar to his avuncular role *vis-à-vis* his brother's children. He could not marry or have intercourse with his sororal nieces. His behaviour

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under the man was not usually practised. In the polygynous family the husband had to spend two nights with each wife *seriatim* and to have at least one intercourse.

The Ruanda thought that when the sex activity of an individual had begun, he could legitimately expect an opportunity to enjoy intercourse as frequently as was socially thought normal. Some parents were said to be severe towards sexual play among children. When the latter indulged in imitation of adult relations, in masturbation, and other manipulations, they were beaten and flogged. Others were more permissive.[8] Homosexuality was common among young Tutsi when being trained at court, and was almost exclusively ascribed to the lack of heterosexual contacts.

Later in life, sex needs were regarded as requiring satisfaction just as any other natural need. If the husband or wife was not available, it was socially permitted to have another partner (among the privileged ones) even if the absent spouse resented it. The sexual needs of a woman were thought to be more urgent when she was pregnant; intercourse once a week was regarded as a minimum. If her husband was absent, therefore, cohabitation with one of his brothers or parallel cousins was viewed almost with favour. When a husband had been away for a very long time, and if it was not known even if he was still living, though his wife could not obtain a divorce she could cohabit and have children with one of her privileged partners, preferably belonging to her husband's patrilineage. A wife never accompanied her husband on his travels to the court or elsewhere. In such cases the Tutsi took with them a concubine, the daughter of a client for instance.

At the court of the king or of important chiefs, there were a few Tutsi women who were openly servants of the chief or the king (*abaja*). In fact they were courtesans, either the daughters of Tutsi clients of the chief or king, who had been invited by the chief or king to come to the court as servants because of their beauty, or divorced women. They received costly presents and were often well-off, having their own herds of cattle. These presents appear to have been rewards not only for sexual favours but also, and perhaps mainly, for some inside information so useful in that world of intrigue.

The preceding paragraphs should not be understood as implying that the Ruanda emphasized exclusively the physical and

[8] Cf. Vincent, 1954, pp. 167-71.

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581 Rundi. Peace is always desirable but rarely achieved. The frequent
593 absence of the husband does not seem to diminish the tensions and problems of domestic life. There is a host of reasons to quarrel, to fight, to separate for several days or forever.

593 A man will be angry with his wife if she has drunk up all his beer, if she has not prepared dinner for him, if she has left the house without his permission, if she has invited company without permission, if she has not done the work he has told her to do, if he comes back home to find her in bed with another man. One quarrel need not destroy a marriage. However, a man is considered
586 perfectly within his rights to send away a woman who is con-
593 sistently disobedient and lazy, who insults her husband and parents-in-law, who does not offer food and drink to her husband's visitors while he is away from home. A woman suspected of witchcraft will be packed off at the first possible moment. A sterile woman will be retained only in the exceptional case: a man gives the bride-price to have children. Among the Tutsi, a woman who takes the milk to drink for herself instead of churning it into butter for her husband will be humiliated and sent away. Her father-in-law will invite her father to drink beer. Then, he asks the offending woman "to show the butter to the bull", who has been led into the yard for this little "ceremony". She has no butter to show. Her father, furious and humiliated, will take her back home and will punish her. Finally, a talkative woman who discusses her husband's business with strangers will certainly be sent back home. Towards a woman who speaks against her husband, who is engaged in intrigue against him, a husband will have no pity. She will be beaten within an inch of her life and sent back to her father—unless she has been clever enough to succeed in a plot that ruins her husband utterly, while she has arranged to be married afterward by his richer and more powerful enemy.

On her side, a woman does not have to put up with a husband who eats so much of what she has cooked that nothing is left for her, nor with a husband who does not eat what she cooks. Does he think, she wants to know, that she is going to poison him, or is it that he prefers the cooking of his mother or sister-in-law? A man who praises other women need not imagine that his wife will stay with him for long, particularly if she is a Tutsikazi. If he has money and does not give his wife clothes, she will surely become angry. If all her children die, the woman will fear her mother-in-law's sorcery and will leave. If the husband consistently overworks her, if he beats her too much and without legitimate reason, she will go back home. Sometimes the marriage does not last the four days of

10:Albert E-5 (1956-1957)1963
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Women of Burundi: A Study of Social Values

Many children represent happiness for both men and women in Burundi. Women adore babies, and a pregnant Rundikazi is a happy woman. Only very rarely do women go into the bush to look for the medicines that cause miscarriage. (For unwed mothers, the motivation is obviously different). It is not possible to find a Rundikazi, even a great-grandmother, who will admit that she is *umukechuru*, a woman beyond the age of child-bearing. A woman who is sterile, or who has had only one child and never again conceived believes that she has been cursed by her paternal aunt or is the victim of witchcraft. Some women produce Gargantuas, children they have carried for 11 months, or 15 months or even two years. The Rundi are by no means ignorant of the biological cause and signs of pregnancy.[16] They simply refuse to acknowledge any other alternative conditions than pregnancy or nursing mother. It is also not for a lack of knowledge of the biological facts that men have no interest in the biological paternity of their children. If a brother or cousin is the biological father, this is no more than is to be expected. If it is a stranger who has got his wife with child, he has made the husband a free gift. The father does not reproach his wife if she has conceived during one of his long absences from home, nor is he at all prejudiced against those of his children who have been fathered by other men, when the time comes to choose his heritor.[17]

Among the princes and the Tutsi of the very good patrilineages, the mother does not take care of the children except to nurse them. A governess, a woman from a family only slightly lower in the social scale than that of the child, looks after it. At present, the wealthy send their school-age children to European schools far from home. In the past, young adolescents were sent to be brought up by princes and princesses. Among the commoners, an infant is with its mother day and night. He is carried nude on her naked back and nursed at the first whimper. The mother plays with her baby, especially with her son, tickles it everywhere, and talks baby talk to it. She adores her baby, but the moment she finds herself pregnant again, she immediately weans her child. The child, who is probably between 18 and 24 months old, is abruptly separated from his mother. He is handed over to a brother, a sister, a grandmother, to anyone who will have him. Sometimes, the grandmother or a grown-up sister will permit a newly-weaned child to suck at the dry breast, but soon the child is put on the ground to crawl about, to play, and to learn that life is hard. It is not surprising that the mortality rate of newly-weaned children is very high.

If there has been a divorce, the departing wife takes with her